



MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Washington County School District
121 W Tabernacle, St. George, Utah 84770
October 11, 2016
4:00 p.m.

Present: Board President Laura Hesson, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Vice President Debbra Zockoll, Board Member David Stirland, Board Member Ralph Brooks, Board Member Kelly Blake, Board Member LaRene Cox, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, Executive Director Bob Sonju, Executive Director Craig Hammer, Executive Director Steve Dunham, Communications Specialist Cody Plumhof, Utah Representative Walt Brooks, Utah Senator Don Ipson, Utah Representative Brad Last, Utah Representative Jon Stanard, Utah State School Board Member Laura Belnap. Others present included Becky Dunn, Amy Barton, and Kathy Petersen.

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer.

Reverence offered by Superintendent Larry Bergeson.

WORK SESSION

Local Legislative Leaders

Laura Hesson asked the legislators what the district leaders could do to help. Jon Stanard suggested that teachers could stop being told that the legislature is bad to them. Brad Last mentioned some upcoming legislative items and said that there wouldn't be a lot of money this year. He then turned the question and asked what legislators could do to improve "work in the trenches." Brent Bills said the state transparency website is taking a lot of time to complete. The last submission has been turned down three times now with formatting. He said there is more granular data than what is available on the USBE website. He feels the transparency website is being more dictatorial. Rex Wilkey pointed out we have turned away some grants, because it would take more man-hours to manage than they are worth. Brent Bills also shared concern with some of the audit questions. Rex Wilkey mentioned some concerns with the considerations for the preschool grant. Brad Last said he would like to do some checking on how the RFP came down before responding. Superintendent Larry Bergeson asked the legislators to watch for legislation that conflicts, giving accountability in one bill that pulls the teeth in another bill. Brad Last explained the pieces used in the school grading legislation. He suggested getting good solid feedback from the District. The District has two turn-around schools. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said we are well down the road in working with the schools, but the parameters don't fit with the timeline. He suggested looking at the criteria for turn-around schools, and eliminating the redundancy. Brad Last suggested that the District give legislators information about conflicts in bills. Many times they have no idea that the bills have conflicts and just use whatever tools they have. They need really great thought-out ideas. Rex Wilkey pointed out that there are other ways to evaluate the schools without having school grading. Brad Last suggested the district administration do some methodology and work with the legislators and the State School

Board giving specific suggestions. Brad Last said some of the kickback from the education community is just because it is a different way of doing things. Bob Sonju said our District could help come up with solutions. The accountability is not the problem and we appreciate the additional money. Don Ipson pointed out that no one has more respect on the hill with educational issues than Brad Last. Craig Seegmiller mentioned concern with the efforts to throw down the UHSAA. Brent Bills mentioned that the CTE MOU has not been resolved. The cost to our District is almost one million dollars. Kelly Blake pointed out how unique this contingency is. Many of the districts in the state never meet with their legislators. He shared appreciation for the legislators. Don Ipson said he feels the District is helpful. Jon Stanard agreed that districts do need to meet regularly with their legislators and build a relationship with them. Laura Belnap asked about additional money. Jon Stanard said they don't know yet, but not to expect extra funds this year. Brent Bills explained that higher education has taken most of the one-time money. He asked why K-12 is not getting their share of the one-time money. He suggested developing a tool to equally split it. Brent Bills also mentioned that higher education has been moving more toward income tax pots. Jon Stanard said public education gets the lion share of the ongoing funding. Superintendent Larry Bergeson mentioned that with the economy of growth, it helps a lot to get additional money. We have grown by 1200 students this year. He mentioned the savings to our District with tilt-up construction. Growth is good, but it brings challenges.

Superintendent Larry Bergeson invited the legislators to meet with State Superintendent Sid Dickson on the October 28th tour in Washington County School District.

Member Zockoll presented a motion to go into a closed session at 1:30 p.m. Member Brooks seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Present: Board President Laura Hesson, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Vice President Debbra Zockoll, Board Member David Stirland, Board Member Ralph Brooks, Board Member Kelly Blake, Board Member LaRene Cox, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, Executive Director Bob Sonju, Executive Director Craig Hammer, Executive Director Steve Dunham, Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer.

CLOSED SESSION

Property and Personnel Items

Member Seegmiller presented a motion to go into a working session at 2:02 p.m. Member Blake seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION

Board Professional Development – Laura Hesson

Laura Hesson shared a document from greatschools.org with signs of effective and ineffective board members and the areas the Board wanted to work on. In the future, she mentioned that the Board would be learning how to better respond to the media. Being more guided and directed in what to say and how to say it will help communicate to the public what is actually happening in the District. She asked the board members to review the signs.

Board PLC Training (Educator Evaluation) – Cheri Stevenson and Bob Sonju

Cheri Stevenson shared an overview of the Educator Effectiveness work in the District. The District has been very successful the past couple of years. This summer the Professional Development team worked on building out the things educators should pay attention to and how to assess them. They took the right work and the evidence of how to monitor those things and aligned them to the Utah

Effective Teaching Standards. The message to the teachers is consistent on how we are training and the process from the school board down to the teachers. Aligning the things teachers are already doing with the standards has helped. She said they have also been working with principals on how to coach teachers.

Bob Sonju said Cheri Stevenson has done a wonderful job leading the evaluation process. There is always anxiety that comes with educator evaluation, but this process is more of a coaching model and is helping to have an influence on student learning. Everything spirals as we are asking the same of everyone.

School Grades – Brad Ferguson

Brad Ferguson shared information about the school grading process. Accountability for the grading is based on SAGE performance and the ACT for the high schools. Anyone can access the school grades through the State Gateway website. He reported that Washington County School District had two F grades and two D grades. Students must be enrolled 160 days to be counted in the accountability outcomes. District wide about 5% of the students opted out of SAGE testing. Brad explained how schools are scored for proficiency and growth. There are 100 points for proficiency in Language Arts, math and science. Growth is figured on individual student basis. Growth compares student scores with similar scores throughout the state. Then they look at students who scored below proficient in the previous year. Focusing on students who scored below in the previous year is where schools really want to focus to get the gains. The system is not terrible, but the grades really are arbitrary. Schools can look at points to see how they are doing. Laura Hesson mentioned that parents are confused with the grading. They do care about their school and are aware of their school, but in a day of choice, parents are willing to move their student if the school is an “F.” Kathy Petersen said the District is doing everything we can to move the schools. Immediately, when the problem was noticed, Title I started to work with the school. Two-thirds of the work was done with principals before the school was designated as a Turnaround School. The law requires specific things for a Turnaround School. A board member will need serve on the committee for each turn around school. Laura Hesson will work with Coral Cliffs Elementary and David Stirland on the Springdale Elementary committee. Each school is required to select a turnaround company to work with. She mentioned that we already have a connection with the School Improvement Network. Doing the right work will make the difference and principal support will make a difference. She explained that rigor was missing in the GVCs at Coral Cliffs Elementary leaving student’s unable to apply the skills needed for SAGE. Kathy Petersen said the School Board is subject to the law for Turnaround schools. The Board needs to look at the leadership of any Turnaround schools, and make changes to personnel, culture, curriculum, assessment, instructional practices, governance, leadership, finance, and policy of the school as needed. The District needs to first identify a Turnaround company, but she said the District doesn’t know how the cost will be covered yet. After making the improvement, there is a reward system for the school and the teachers. The District will need to determine how they will deal with that. It may be problematic with teachers not receiving the reward. Dave Stirland asked if the Board is doing everything they can to help these schools. Craig Seegmiller pointed out they are holding the administration responsible for the changes necessary. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the District started long ago. Kathy Petersen said the plan is not due until March, but a plan will be done in November and we will move forward even if the state has not held a meeting to identify companies. We can’t wait until March or April to fix things. Laura Hesson suggested that the administration also be watching those schools who are showing similar signs. Bob Sonju said the district administration is very aware and responding. The administration has been pouring over the data. Brad Ferguson noted that the link to the school grades on our website.

UCA Goals – Richard Holmes and Brad Ferguson

Brad Ferguson said UCA stands for Utah Consolidated Application. The Board received a summary

of the goals. The budgets will be submitted on November 1st with the goals. Federal funding and much of the state funding is included in the application. Notifications are sent throughout the year.

ESSA Workgroups – Larry Bergeson

Larry Bergeson shared information about the ESSA Workgroups. He said he could share information on the work groups with any board member interested in serving in an ESSA work group. Brent Bills said the comparability rules would make it hard for us to do staffing. Individuals can also participate electronically.

Boundary Planning – Rex Wilkey and Richard Holmes

Rex Wilkey said the administration needs clarification on what the Board would like with boundary planning. Do they want to look at the big picture or just make smaller needed adjustments? Richard Holmes said from the secondary standpoint, he feels we can just focus on Pine View and Desert Hills for the creation of the new school. Dixie and Snow Canyon may still need to be adjusted down the road. Rex Wilkey suggested with elementary schools, the Board could shift all school boundaries, or just look at smaller areas. Laura Hesson suggested looking at the plans in the work meeting at the end of the month. Richard Holmes said the high schools would be close to an enrollment of 1000 students with the boundary changes. Rex Wilkey recommended phasing the boundary changes out and starting with smaller areas first. A proposed timeline was shared with the Board. The plan includes approving the boundaries in January. Rex Wilkey mentioned some concern with Open Enrollment opportunities. There may need to be some grade level limits even if a school is open for enrollment.

Follow-up Items from Previous Meeting

There were no follow-up items.

Open Discussion of the Board

UHSAA Update – Craig Seegmiller

Craig Seegmiller briefly reported on the recent issues that could have an affect on the UHSAA. Craig Hammer shared a copy of the revised rule. The October numbers are coming and will determine the classification. There will be six classifications.

USBA Update – Kelly Blake

Kelly Blake had nothing to report.

MBA Update - Laura Hesson

Laura Hesson said the assignments had been emailed. All assignments need to be in and reported by December 1st.

DXATC Update – David Stirland

David Stirland had nothing to report.

FCAOG & Foundation Update – LaRene Cox

LaRene Cox had nothing to report on FCAOG.

LaRene Cox reported that the Golf Tournament raised \$43,000. The Spooky Town event has had several problems with planning this year. Many of the vendors have been dropping out due to insurance requirements. She said that Sterling Scholar fundraising is on track. She mentioned the benefit that comes from the classroom grants. It doubles the teacher money for the year. Teachers do have to apply for the grants and meet specific criteria to receive a grant.

Boundary Committee Update – Debbra Zockoll

Debbra Zockoll had nothing to report.

Audit Committee Update – Ralph Brooks

Ralph Brooks reported on the Audit Committee meetings. The committee discussed how the audits are reviewed and is looking at all transactions. The auditors only come in and look at a selection of the transactions. The Audit Committee is left holding the bag in the end. He feels that something has to be done to keep people honest. Kelly Blake said they talked about the accountability function. Members of the Board sit on the committee and would like to see administration held more accountable as the Board has a direct responsibility for the use of public funds. Debbra Zockoll suggested that when the Audit Committee comes back with findings, something should be done. Brent Bills said he would like clear directives from the Board on what they would like done. He is working with principals to clean up the problems. Ralph Brooks said the bills have to be paid, either by the District or by the individual who made the error. He suggested information about issues should be documented in the employee's file. Superintendent Bergeson said the district administration is not overlooking issues and they are documenting information in the personnel files, and they are having very frank discussions with individuals when problems are found. Craig Hammer said it is a principal's responsibility and the principal should be involved in the discipline process. Kelly Blake suggested a directive should go out from the Board on the use and abuse of public funds. Employees need to know that the Board will not tolerate it. The Board suggested making it a resolution from the Board.

Brent Bills briefly reported on the bond issuance of \$59,500,000. He said \$35,000,000 is issuance of new bonds and \$24,000,000 being refinanced. There is still \$85,000,000 left.

Laura Hesson mentioned the upcoming elections. Several schools are polling locations. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said it is all taken care of. He has been working with Capt. McCracken of the St. George Police Department to have officers at each location.

The next Board Work Meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, October 27th at 5:15 p.m.

Items for Board Review

1. Enrollment
2. Safe Schools
3. GRAMA Requests

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Washington County School District was held after due, legal, and timely notice being given to all members and interested parties. Board President Laura Hesson called the meeting to order and welcomed all visitors. Board members present were Craig Seegmiller, Debbra Zockoll, David Stirland, Ralph Brooks, Kelly Blake, and LaRene Cox. Staff members present were Superintendent Larry Bergeson and Business Administrator Brent Bills.

OPEN MEETING – 4:00 p.m.

Board President Welcome – Laura Hesson

Pledge of Allegiance – Board President Hesson

Reverence – Member Seegmiller

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

1. September 13, 2016 Meeting of the Board of Education

- B. Financial Report
- C. Personnel Items
- D. Dixie High School – School LAND Trust Plan Change

Member Blake presented a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items A through D (including the Early Retirement request discussed in closed session). Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BOARD ACTION ITEMS

No comments were given.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Policy 4100 Graduation Requirements/School Credits – Colin Metzger

Richard Holmes said the policy is still being worked on and asked the Board to postpone the approval.

Policy 2900 Attendance – Richard Holmes

Richard Holmes said a piece was added for excused absences. One minor wording change was suggested and has been included in the changes. A couple of additional updates were also made to the policy.

Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the changes to Policy 2900 Attendance. Member Zockoll seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Policy 0002 Board Meetings – Lyle Cox

Larry Bergeson said the policy change allows board members to participate or respond electronically in meetings. A quorum will still need to be present at the location.

Member Stirland presented a motion to approve the changes to Policy 0002 Board Meetings. Member Blake seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Policy 7050 Employee Travel – Brent Bills

Brent Bills said the changes were to align the policy and administrative letter on employee travel. He said the recommendation is to not change the policy, but change the administrative letter instead. The changes were tabled.

High School Dirt Work Bid – Craig Hammer

Craig Hammer briefly reviewed the Bid Committee recommendation. Five bids were received for the dirt work contract. The project will take about 90 days. The recommendation is to award the contract to Interstate Rock and alternative “C” Geo Grid at the orchestra pit for a sum of \$2,353,522. Craig Hammer said they have worked with the District before and did a great job. They will start the project right away and should be done by the end of January. The contract would save the District \$600,000.

Member Seegmiller presented a motion to award the contract to Interstate Rock Products and alternate “C” GeoGrid. Member Stirland seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Consideration of a resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of not more than \$59,500,000 General Obligation School Building and Refunding Bonds, delegating authority to certain officials to approve the final terms and provisions of and confirm the sale of such bonds and providing for related matters.

Brent Bills said this is the third issuance of bonds and explained that we don’t issue bonds all at the same time. Matt Dugdale, George K. Baum & Company, said that the bond issuance is split into two

pieces with 60% for construction and 40% for refinance of bonds issued in 2007 at a lower rate. The District will save \$440,000 annually until 2023, saving the District over two and a half million dollars. The District has a great rating. The resolution approves the issuance of bonds up to \$59,500,000. The maximum rate for the bond is 5%, but it is expected to be closer to 2% for a term of 17 years. The District has great management of the bonds and pays the bonds on time and for a shorter amount of time, which translates into a lower interest rate. He shared a book with the history of the district bonds. The District has great management and ratings. He congratulated the Board on the great financing strength.

Member Brooks presented a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of not more than \$59,500,000 General Obligation School Building and Refunding Bonds.

Member Zockoll seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

UCA Goals – Richard Holmes and Brad Ferguson

Brad Ferguson said the UCA goals are created relative to federal and state programs that we are funded for. They reflect the unified effort for completing these goals.

Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the Utah Consolidated Application (UCA) Goals. Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Policy 9100 Adult Education and High School Completion – Richard Holmes and Sheri Fisher

Richard Holmes said that Sheri Fisher has been reviewing the policy to make needed updates. Under section 3.1.3 (11), students complete a form saying that when they withdraw from school they will not be allowed to re-enroll. The policy would allow consideration for rare occasions to allow a student in good standing to return to their boundary school.

Booster Club Solicitation Policy – Brent Bills

Brent Bills explained that the District has been dealing with issues from the audit related to booster clubs. The District does not have an arms length policy. There has also been a change in the law that separates foundations from the umbrella of the District. He has been trying to find a way to stay safe and legal. The proposed policy and admin letter would go hand-in-hand. With the proposed policy, booster club funds would run through the school. The booster would still have control on how the money is spent. Monetary transactions would be included in the procedures manual to give more directions. The District still has to account for the money. The policy will bring us inline with best practices. Brent Bills said he would be meeting with principals and booster clubs for feedback and input on the proposed policy. Some schools already run the booster clubs funds through the school. He will work with others to make sure they understand.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Student Achievement – Brad Ferguson

Brad Ferguson and Nadine Walters shared the DIBELS outcome for the first period of this year. DIBELS stands for Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills. The assessment is given to student in grades 1-3 during the first, middle and end of the year and focuses mostly on phonics. It is a screening process and indicates who might be at risk of not being able to reach the next level and move forward. Students can move in and out of competency levels. He shared results from the end of the year last year.

1st Grade – 69% of students reaching benchmark in 2016 – Utah average was 73%

2nd Grade – 72% of students reaching benchmark in 2016 – Utah average was 76%

3rd Grade – 72% of students reaching benchmark in 2016 – Utah average was 78%

Nadine Walters said there have been pockets of student growth. She has been looking at those pockets and found that teachers were using the mCLASS tool to track student progress throughout the

year and were making instructional adjustments as needed. She is working with over 100 teachers to do deep data digging, look at interventions, and how to change instruction when it doesn't seem to be working. They are using early literacy skills as their foundation. Teachers are working hard at it.

Instructional Technology – Charlie Roberts

What's Right in WCSD Schools

Horizon Elementary School

Mona Haslem shared what is right at Horizon Elementary. She feels the school and District are doing so much better at understanding that students learn differently and at working with students to meet their learning needs. Showing evidence and improving collaboration culture at school has helped with improvement at the school. Schools have so much data through programs and just need to use the data. One change at Horizon Elementary last year was to have aides work with the students one-to-one and focus on the skills needed by individual students. They are also using a phonics survey and pairing students to work on fluency and competency through Dyad reading. It is a research-based practice. In math, they are doing Number Talks, which requires the students to solve math problems mentally. Students have to mentally find the answer then share how they problem solved. Teachers can listen and immediately determine who is getting it and who is not. Mona Haslem said that the Community Council has used funds for more STEM activities at the school. The school is in its 5th year with Chinese Dual Immersion and has been able to hire an intern this year. There are 275 students in Chinese half day. The school has a collaborative culture and is focusing on the things that are most important. Teachers have time during P.E. for professional development. Through the PLC survey, teachers said they wanted more observation time. Teachers are observing other teachers monthly, and they are able to record themselves with the swivel cameras and then come back and talk about it. Tuesday morning is PLC time for team planning, GVCs, interventions, learning targets, and extensions. The most important things they are doing is narrowing it down to individual students and using the data.

Snow Canyon Middle School

Brad Bench shared what the school is doing for students who don't get what is being taught and those who already know it. The school has set up some advisory time five times a week. Students who need extra time in specific areas can be called in for extra help and support. Each department is given one priority day. Students who are all caught up have a "Warrior Retreat" and can choose what they want to do. There is also a testing center for students who need to catch up on a test. Brad Bench reported that gains and improvement have been seen. Even on non-priority days, teachers can call for students, or students can go to a teacher for extra help. Last year 6100 interventions were done with individual students. For those who already know the material, extension activities are held. Students can choose to participate in something extra at the school. Each year the program is being fine-tuned to make it better. Through the process, he has learned that all the schools are great, people are much more important than programs, student confidence and how they feel about the future is more important than one grade, and the principal doesn't have all the answers and does need the help and support of others.

Reports

Superintendent

Superintendent Larry Bergeson said he is proud of all of our schools. Students can get a quality education at any of our schools. He mentioned that with our tilt-up construction, we save a lot of money, but still have buildings to be proud of.

He mentioned that our partnership with the local cities and police departments is amazing. We have a large number of individuals from the community that meet and discuss safety issues with us.

He takes time to visit the schools fairly often and mentioning visiting Little Valley as they were in the middle of a fire drill. He appreciated the efficiency of the drill. He noted that the end of first quarter is this week. He expressed appreciation for all who work hard to help students.

Board

No reports were given.

Association

Amy Barton, WCEA, said their big focus right now is the state and local elections. They have been working hard to get education friendly candidates in the open positions. They recognize that changes in policy could affect the District with staffing and teacher retention. She said that the UEA work tirelessly on those types of issues. They are also continuing to work on the ESSA Committees. She mentioned the upcoming UEA Convention in the next week. The District's calendar did not align this year, but teachers throughout the state will be going to get great professional development. She said she would be meeting next Monday with the district leadership and mentioned that those meetings have been tremendously productive.

PTA/PTO/Community Council

Becky Dunn, PTA, said that PTA is in the middle of Reflections. Many entries have been turned in. An Open House is scheduled for November 16th from 6-8 p.m. to showcase winners from each school moving on to council. Becky Dunn also mentioned that PTA is supporting Utah Amendment B. There are three main changes to School LAND Trust funding including interest and dividends distributions, an annual cap, and investing funds prudently. She encouraged everyone to research and learn more about the amendment.

PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD – 3 min. each

1. Scott Messel shared that his St. James neighborhood has been sent to three different high schools. He is concerned about boundary adjustments upcoming. He asked the Board to look at and consider and be sensitive to areas with small pockets of students. It is easier to keep the students together.
2. Rachel Messel said it is hard for children to change schools. She understands that changes are needed with growth, but asked for sensitivity to small groups of neighborhood students.
3. Donald Watlet shared his concerns about the dust problems at the Crimson Middle School site. The contractor has created large berms and as storms come through there has been large amounts of dust. He asked that the Board help assure that there is a better job on the dust control as they move into the high school work. He is also concerned that nothing has been done with the roads yet. The contractor has been good to respond, but he would like to know if the District plans open the school before roads are finished. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the District has continued to meet with city officials. Planning and preparation is being done. In the development and master plan, the roads are there. The roads will not be done tomorrow and he can't give a definite date for completion, but the city understands the need for the roads before the schools are opened. There is a lot of growth planned for the area. The city is making preparations for the roads.

Board President Laura Hesson adjourned the meeting at 5:13 p.m., as there was no further business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT